

U. S. CONSULATE ANSWERS VISA-RELATED QUESTIONS

CHENNAI: This is part of the ongoing question and answer series handled by the U.S. Consulate General in Chennai relating to the U.S. visa process. Readers are encouraged to submit their questions on U.S. visas to reporting.thehindu@gmail.com. The answers will be published in The Hindu on the last Wednesday of every month. For full official information on U.S. visas, visit <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/visas.html>. Text of questions and answers provided by the U.S. Consulate:

My sister, a U.S. citizen, would like to invite me to visit her and will be meeting my travelling and living expenses. How long will it take to get Non-immigrant Visa interview appointment? What are the required documents I need from her?

What other documents are needed apart from Passport to prove that I have a residence outside the United States which I do not intend to abandon and I am coming to the United States for a temporary period?

I am currently residing in Delhi, is it possible to give interview to the U.S. Embassy in other parts of India like Kolkata and Chennai? Can she come with me during interview?

Waiting times for an appointment can fluctuate, depending upon the type of visa applied for, the Consulate/Embassy you are making the appointment with, and the current demand for appointments. Presently, the waiting time for a non-immigrant visitor visa appointment at the U.S. Consulate General in Chennai is about four days. No documents from your sister are required. To apply for a U.S. visa, you need to complete Form DS-160 and bring the confirmation page, preferably printed with a laser printer, with you to the interview along with your passport. When uploading your picture for the application, make sure the photograph is less than 6 months old, has a white background without shadows, is unmounted, and displays the full face.

Evidence that shows a residence outside of the United States to which you intend to return differs from individual to individual. Although Consular Officers rely most on what an applicant says during the interview to determine eligibility for a visa, it is recommended that any documentary evidence that shows family, social, physical, or business ties outside of the United States be brought to the interview in case the Officer should request to see them.

It is advisable to apply at the nearest Consulate/Embassy to your residence however this is not a requirement. You are free to apply at any Consulate/Embassy of your choice. Each applicant is required to interview on their own. If special accommodations are necessary due to an applicant being a minor, elderly, and/or physically challenged, arrangements must be requested through the Consulate prior to the date of interview. (THE HINDU, APRIL 28)